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ABSTRACT

In this report on leadership in the public schools, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton demonstrates how to make schools better places for learning and to encourage more of it. A brief biography of Clinton is presented in the beginning. The report represents a new generation of thinking on school leadership in that it emphasizes the leadership responsibilities of all actors in the learning process. It reports a new willingness on the part of some leaders to share leadership responsibilities in a way that does not diminish, but in fact enhances, their ability to lead schools to their full potential. The paper proposes broad political empowerments to change the direction of American schools at the expense of bureaucratic maintenance and intellectual conformity. The body of the report is found in three sections: (1) What do school leaders do? (2) What should state policy be? and (3) What should the other players do? (SI)

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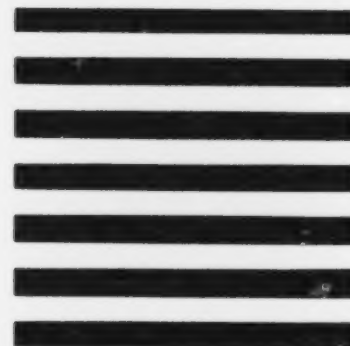
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SPEAKING OF LEADERSHIP

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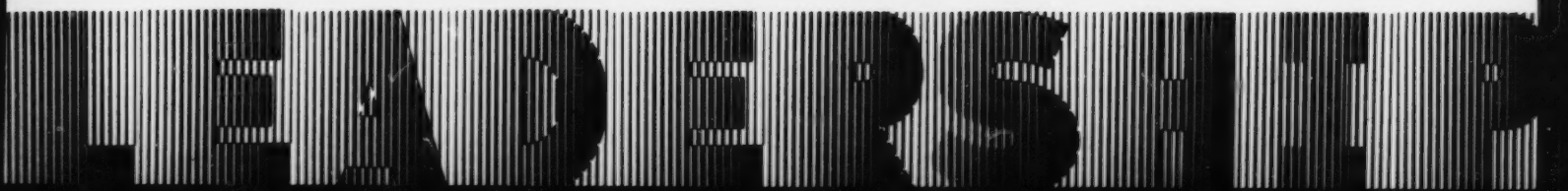


SPEAKING OF LEADERSHIP

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton's interest in leadership as a distinct and essential aspect of reform has been well documented, not only in his home state where he has led the movement to change the direction of education, but throughout the nation in his capacity as chairman of both the Education Commission of the States (ECS) and the National Governors' Association (NGA). He also chaired the NGA Task Force on School Leadership and Management last year.

First elected governor of Arkansas in 1978, Clinton, 40, is the first governor to serve a four-year term since the post-Civil War Reconstruction era, and only the second to serve four terms. He is the first Arkansas governor to chair NGA and ECS simultaneously. Last year, as chairman of the Southern Growth Policies Board, Clinton appointed the Commission on the Future of the South, which issued its acclaimed report *Halfway Home And A Long Way To Go*.

Born in Hope, Arkansas, he attended public schools in Hot Springs.



Bill Clinton
Governor of Arkansas
1986-87 Chairman

Following his graduation from Georgetown University with a bachelor's degree in international affairs, he went on to study at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. He

returned to the United States and earned his law degree from Yale University School of Law in 1973 and three years later was elected Arkansas attorney general.

Cited by fellow governors as "one of the five most effective governors in the nation" in a 1986 *Newsweek* poll, Clinton in 1983 organized other governors in a successful drive to stop the termination of Social Security benefits and has since been very active working on agricultural and economic issues with other governors.

Hillary Rodham Clinton has taken an active role in working to improve education and public services in Arkansas. A partner in the Rose Law Firm, Little Rock, she is chair of the board of directors of the Children's Defense Fund and served as chair of the Arkansas Education Standards Committee.

The Clintons' one child, Chelsea, age 7, attends public school in Little Rock.

For all the attention education has generated these past few years, there has been too little focused on the most important yet least understood aspect of any lasting reform effort: *leadership*.

Last year I was fortunate to chair the Task Force on School Leadership and Management for the National Governors' Association. I knew then that strong school leadership was key to effective schools and more learning. I know now, having spent much of this year visiting schools across the country and talking with educators as well as business leaders, that leadership is the common thread that runs through all of the recommendations set forth in *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*.

Visions for improving student learning have found life in the policies advocated by governors and adopted by state legislatures, but these same leaders share my conviction that any reform strategy failing to recognize the need for new, sustained leadership in the schools will not endure.

The people running our schools right now fall into one of three types. At the one extreme, there are individuals who have no intention of changing, who view their position as a reward for doing what they've been told to do all their lives and not upsetting the grand scheme of things by taking a single risk on behalf of kids. They're just counting the days until retirement. Anything we can do to find appropriate work for them elsewhere in the system, as soon as possible, is a just and humane step in the right direction.

At the other extreme are those individuals who have turned schools around. Any and every case study on effective schools is a case study on leadership. We should dig out their stories, pick their brains, analyze their behavior and put their wisdom into print, policy and practice. That is exactly the intent of this report.

It is in the great middle ground that most of our school administrators are found and where we need to direct the bulk of our attention. Most of them want to make a difference but are besieged by oppressive bureaucracy — paperwork, intrusive special interests, state and federal wardens, regulation buffs and their attorneys. They want to be leaders, but they don't know how or don't have time. They often work in an environment where innovation is not valued but downright frowned upon, where decisions are made by default. Risk is not written into their contracts. It is to these people that this report is directed and dedicated.

... what counts is not just what you know now, but what you are capable of learning in the future.

We have a great opportunity today to change school leadership for the better, for three reasons: Most leaders of the first round of top-down, regulatory reforms understand the limits of that approach; more than 40% of our current administrators will retire within 10 years; and the changes brought about by technology alone have

already bypassed the assumptions upon which our schools were founded and the delivery of education organized.

That makes it possible for schools to discard the old-fashioned, rigidly hierarchical decision-making process, even as the manufacturing sector — which pioneered and perfected that organizational model — discards it for one more fully utilizing the knowledge and creativity of all who work in the factory. This is opportunity knocking.

To seize it requires fundamental changes in the way educational organizations as well as individual educators behave.

We need schools that equip people, not simply with the rudimentary skills necessary to do routine work for a mass-production, assembly-line economy, but with the abilities to take on new kinds of advanced and intellectually sophisticated work.

We want schools where the life of the mind is front and center, where curiosity and imagination are valued, because what counts is not just what you know now, but what you are capable of learning in the future.

In such schools, teachers must work in very different ways. Principals must lead by example, by convincing teachers that they, too, can lead. They must protect their faculty in order to support and encourage risk, and must be actively involved in the learning process of the school. Superintendents must support their principals. School boards, state agencies, legislators and governors must support school leaders in creative enterprise, not safe routines.

Is everyone able to do all he or she can do to help students learn?

Therefore, the essential next step for education reform is to empower school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers and community members with the tools they need to create a new climate that helps students learn better and at the same time to get people in those positions who can do the job.

Empowerment of all the actors does *not* mean stripping one individual or body of leadership in favor of another, nor is it to divvy up the leadership, appropriating the right amount to each. Rather, it is for all the players to realize the different but complementary roles each must play, to enhance the overall potential for leadership by enhancing the leadership role of each within the proper realm.

In their book, *In Search of Excellence*, Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman note, "We observed, time and again, extraordinary energy exerted above and beyond the call of duty when the worker (shop floor worker, sales assistant, desk clerk) is given even a modicum of apparent control over his or her destiny."

Profound change requires the application of this basic principle to schools, beginning with the simple question:

Is everyone able to do all he or she can do to help students learn?

This question requires us to ask whether the system works to maximize the learning process and whether all the actors in it are prepared to do their part.

Education reform in the eighties was born out of a national consensus that America could not maintain its economic, political or military leadership in the world or continue to offer its own children the promise of a brighter tomorrow without much better schools. Progress has been made, but we have a long way to go, especially in communities with large numbers of at-risk children, for whom we must reconcile our commitments to excellence and equal opportunity. It is clear that there can be no one model for success in reaching the next level of progress, but it is equally clear that the leaders we choose, how we choose them and what they are expected and permitted to do will reflect the depth of our commitment to making our schools better and our future secure.

WHY *THIS* REPORT IS DIFFERENT

This document is designed to spark productive debate and action. It differs from previous reports because:

- It represents a new generation of thinking on school leadership in that it emphasizes the leadership responsibilities of *all* actors in the learning process.
- It reports a new willingness on the part of some incumbent leaders to share leadership responsibilities in a

way that does not diminish, but in fact enhances, their ability to lead schools to their full potential.

- It seeks broad political empowerment to change the direction of our schools at the expense of bureaucratic maintenance and intellectual conformity.

I wrote this report with a very practical purpose: to demonstrate how we can make schools better places for learning and to encourage more of it. To that end, I have sacrificed alarmist rhetoric, pedagogical jargon and distracting footnotes. It is only one element in a multimedia effort by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) to open the issue up to continued public investigation. In tandem with this report, ECS is releasing a videotaped documentary on school leadership for widespread distribution and launching a series of local leadership forums throughout the country.

THE LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVES

What is leadership? What does it look like in a school setting? What can we learn from history about the qualities of leadership that will make schools better places for learning?

I decided to ask the experts, beginning with the teachers, students and administrative staff at Little Rock's Central High School. What they told me surfaced repeatedly in my conversations with scores of other individuals in positions of school, political and corporate leadership as well as scholars who have made leadership their own special field of inquiry. They all agree on three broad characteristics. The effective school leader is:

- A **visionary**, with the understanding of what the school is all about and the ability to articulate that vision clearly and persistently through realistic goals and objectives
- A **tactician**, with the ability to match task with talent, whether human or technical, align scarce resources with school needs and use every opportunity to move a school closer to its vision
- A **diplomat**, with the self-discipline to evaluate fairly how objectives and resource management are working to support vision, coupled with an unyielding commitment to excellence while communicating with a diversity of school interest groups

In the best of all possible worlds, the following might run in the "Help Wanted" sections of the major newspapers and trade journals.

W A N T E D: School Leader

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual with the strength to provide a sense of direction for the school; one who can demonstrate the ability to do successful and thoughtful short- and long-range planning • An individual who can articulate a vision of what the school should become; who can | <p>communicate well with groups of people and enlist their support in allowing this vision to become a reality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual who has excellent human relation skills; one who understands how to delegate authority and who at the same time remains in charge and responsible for ac- |
|---|--|

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| <p>complishing goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual who is committed to treating staff as professionals; one who involves teachers and administrators appropriately in the decision-making process • An individual who is willing to listen to staff, parents and administrators; one who uses that input to make constructive and thoughtful decisions • An individual who is committed to providing a superior education for all of the children of the community; one who sees the needs of children as a whole rather than viewing the children as members of separate and discernible groups • An individual who is committed to developing respect for human differences; one who promotes a healthy atmosphere encouraging a celebration of diversity and an appreciation of an increasingly multicultural community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual who has extremely high standards and expectations; one who will establish the same standards and expectations for all members of the school • An individual who is clear in defining goals; one who is willing to be held accountable for achieving those goals while also holding associates — superiors and subordinates alike — accountable to a similar level of expectation • An individual who can articulate the central values of the school; one who creates a culture allowing the various elements of the school to work together toward attainment of those values • An individual who demands that administrative matters remain in the hands of administrative staff • An individual who can work long hours under great pressure for relatively low pay |
|---|--|

The title "School Leader" here clearly refers to a school principal, but these are the same qualifications we would want in a superintendent, and, in many respects, are what we need from outstanding teachers as well.

Why would anyone answer such an ad? Most teachers are underpaid, and, in an article for the *American School Board Journal*, John H. Holcomb, director of the Division of Educational Leadership at Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas, argues that once the actual hours on the job are factored in, a person with a master's degree earns more per hour as a classroom teacher than does a school principal.

Still, new leaders are emerging, men and women who understand what needs to be done, and who are willing to be the agents of change.

WHAT DO SCHOOL LEADERS DO?

There are, as yet, no catechisms on school leadership, and it is not my intention here to draft one. John Gardner points out that "any attempt to describe a social process as complex as leadership inevitably makes it seem more orderly than it is. Leadership," he told me, "is not tidy."

Gardner describes leaders in this way:

Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is the society. They can serve as symbols of the moral unity of the society. They can express the values that hold the society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that

tear a society apart and unite them in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts.

I offer the following case studies as illustrations of how some individuals exhibit these characteristics in our schools.

• Protecting School Time for Learning

"There's a distinction between managing tasks and being a leader," Richard DuFour, principal at Adlai Stevenson High School in Prairie View, Indiana, told the annual conference of the American Association of School Administrators. Asked what makes a competent task manager an effective school leader, DuFour answers with a question: Does the principal have a vision of what the school should stand for and what its "core values" should be?

Leaders have vision and know how to put new ideas into practice. Great, but what does that mean? How do I get vision? How will I know it when I see it? Will it hurt? Here is how leadership in one school district translated a particular vision into daily practice.

In Georgia's DeKalb County School System, every activity is valued according to its support of learning time. Superintendent Robert Freeman and Null Tucker, his research and evaluation director, use a chart called "The Universe of the Learner" to organize all roles and relationships throughout the suburban Atlanta district.

At the center of the chart's four concentric circles is "learning." Everything in the surrounding, supporting circles that increases the quantity and the quality of student-teacher-parent interactions for student learning is encouraged; everything that cuts into that time or diminishes the quality of interactions is attacked.

Are teachers doing too much paperwork? Cut it to the minimum. Are there problems with air conditioning or heating that create discomfort for learners? Fix them immediately. Are too many messages coming into the classroom? Consolidate them. Students forgetting their homework? Get the parents in. Intercom interruptions? Shut it off. Too much time spent in checking homework, filling out slips and passes or collecting money? Find another way to get it done or just stop doing it. Learning time is the No. 1 value.

Freeman and Tucker are obsessed with identifying and weeding out "time off task." They stalk the halls and comb their data for any sign of this pestilence because leadership in the DeKalb County School System means "protecting the time on task for the teacher and the student." A principal who does not know how much time is being wasted, who does not examine materials to see that they save learning time or who does not observe staff to see how well they are using their time hears about it come evaluation time. Leadership seminars, a field-based leadership visitation program, a principal's assessment center and the superintendent himself are there as resources for building that kind of focus into a leadership style.

Principals are not the only people accountable for protecting learning time. Teachers are evaluated for their capacity to squeeze every learning moment possible out of every class; lunchroom staff, bus drivers and custodians talk about how they can help; counselors, teaching aides and specialists know how they can save or waste student time; school nurses and librarians know how the way they do their jobs can protect learning time.

• Promoting Collaboration and Team-building

In the old days, when only a few people were well educated, . . . leadership of the uninformed was likely to be organized in vertical structures of command and control. Leadership of the informed is different: It results in the necessary action only if exercised by persuasion, bringing into consultation those who are going to have to do something to make the decision work.

— Harlan Cleveland

When Wilma Parrish decided to test the waters on a team-teaching and team-planning approach for Western Middle School (Alamance County, North Carolina), she didn't dispatch a memo to her faculty informing them of her new directive. She sent them a monograph.

The spiral of leadership opportunity I envision pulls schools, districts and states together — in a kind of double helix model.

Each of Western Middle's 39 faculty members received a copy of "Middle-School Goals and Earmarks," her position paper synthesizing the research and findings that led the National Middle School Association to adopt team planning and teaching as a goal for its constituents. In a well-thought-out, well-prepared and well-written document, Parrish discussed research on curriculum, home-based learning, continuous progress evaluation and a variety of instruction models — outlining each level of responsibility, including her own.

"It is the responsibility of the principal, as instructional leader of the school, to initiate the interim steps essential for a cooperative program that will involve the entire staff in team planning and teaching," she wrote.

This approach gave her faculty a center of focus and was in itself an exercise in team planning. On other ideas she would like to try out, Parrish prepares similar position papers encouraging collaboration. "I wouldn't want to shove it on everyone," she told Joan Lipsitz, Lilly Endowment, Inc.'s program director of education, and former director of the Center for Early Adolescence at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

In her field studies, Lipsitz finds that effective schools do not work in isolation. Parrish and other middle-school principals have the support of the district superintendent. "No one in the central office determines what is developmentally appropriate for the age group. The superintendent assumes that principals know what a middle school should be from training and prior experience," says Lipsitz.

The principal and the superintendent also have the support of their school board and a rural community rooted in "old values: the work ethic, help your neighbor, support your school," as one member of the county school board puts it.

"Why is it a good school? Everyone is pulling for the same thing," says the board chairman. "And behind every good school there's a good community."

• **Providing Instructional Leadership**

If there is one thing I find that successful industries and effective schools have in common, it is an intensely "hands-on" leadership approach. In schools, that means instructional leadership. "There is no subject here I can't teach," says one school principal, who, like the effective corporate leader, spends less time in the office and more time out in the marketplace and on the shop floor.

"When things get crazy, I leave the central office and visit a school. The stars get back in their orbits and things look right again," says a district superintendent.

Education reforms have yet to address the instructional leadership aspect very well, even though training and evaluation of school principals appear to be more widespread. ECS's Information Clearinghouse reports that 26 states have established leadership academies and internship programs for prospective principals.

Among 12 states that evaluate the competence of principal candidates, North Carolina requires a two-

year mentor support program as part of its quality assurance scheme.

At Washington Elementary School in McPherson, Kansas, Principal Mary Wade doubles as a substitute teacher when any member of her faculty is visiting another school or attending an inservice meeting. She doesn't babysit in the teacher's absence. She follows the teacher's lesson plan and teaches the class.

In one sample week, Wade worked as a kindergarten teacher's aide for two afternoons and taught music classes for one day. She went so far as to have a teacher evaluate her as she taught another teacher's class.

The instructional leader may not be the principal, but there must be one in the school. At Varina High School in Virginia, instructional leadership is provided by a team of teachers who continue to teach, but with a lighter teaching load, while supervising and evaluating groups of teachers in their school.

In Minnesota, a five-member team of "lead teachers" has received state approval to *replace* a school principal in the Taylor's Falls School District, a one-school system of 340 students and 21 faculty. The three-year experiment is at once a small step and a giant leap forward.

• **Promoting Flexibility and Interdependence: Why Leadership Can't Operate in a Vacuum**

Granted, there are lessons for business and education from the likes of such studies as *The Art of Japanese*

Flexibility is key to effective school leadership and the policies that support it.

Management, but there are important lessons as well to be found in *The Lives of a Cell*. Somehow, without Management By Objective or Program Planning Budgeting Systems, nature manages to get by. While flexibility is the natural order of things in a universe of continual expansion and contraction, only recently have we realized that it is an effective management tool.

Flexibility is key to effective school leadership and the policies that support it. While it is the isolated success story I've used to illustrate the kind of new leadership we need in education, I can't overemphasize that schools, teachers and systems cannot work in isolation. The spiral of leadership opportunity I envision pulls schools, districts and states together — in a kind of double helix model as opposed to the traditional vertical hierarchy or less rigid horizontal approach — each functioning independently but each supporting that larger organism: learning.

For example: Three years ago, Principal La Vaun Dennett and her faculty at Mont Lake School, a racially balanced K-5 magnet in Seattle, met to discuss how they could better deliver a quality education to at-risk youngsters. Roughly half the 230 students are from single-parent households, and 70% live outside the school neighborhood boundaries. Achievement levels are mixed.

They began by challenging three major assumptions that guided the day-to-day operations at Mont Lake. They asked why teachers had to be used only according to strict funding specifications, why staff development had to take place outside the school and why special classes, resource rooms and other pull-out schemes were the only methods for meeting the needs of learning disabled students.

Dennett sought permission from the district to use teachers differently and with board and superintendent support moved three resource-room teachers into a regular classroom. This lowered the ratio of students-to-teacher from 28-to-1 to 20-to-1.

Having done this, the principal found a new sense of engagement and commitment among her faculty. She had never before believed that class size was a real factor, but a revitalized teaching staff turned that opinion around. As teachers concentrated their energies to meet the special needs of their students better, it became increasingly clear that they needed further professional development themselves.

The entire faculty aggressively entered a school-based staff development program, focused on learning styles, classroom management, cooperative learning and managing effective student-teacher interactions.

Should principals be allowed more discretion in budgeting allocations that permit flexibility in management?

The third initiative restructured the school day. For a few hours each morning, basic skills classes were reorganized without regard to age. The student-teacher ratio was again reduced, ranging from 18-to-1 in one class to 10-to-1 in another. This was accomplished by assigning the physical education teacher, science teacher and the school librarian — all of whom had received inservice training — to work with these youngsters on their basic skills.

The results were reflected in tremendous increases in standardized test scores, regrouping according to the skills and concepts students are working on rather than categorical ability. Both of these brought about a change in teacher and student expectations, says Dennett.

"We decided that we had to stop labeling kids," she explains. "We spent so much time telling kids and their parents that there's something wrong with them, and that practice only gave teachers an excuse to say that learning problems were not their fault. We changed all that. We changed how we look at the system, how we work with parents."

The new arrangement, however, cost Mont Lake its Chapter 1 and special education funds, totaling \$100,000. Once the school stopped labeling kids as special needs students, the federal government withdrew entitlement money.

For the first two years, the state offered \$25,000, provided the district cover the balance. Under pressure from competing interests elsewhere in the district, local

authorities have decided to cancel their share of support, thereby canceling out the state's as well.

The situation raises several questions about appropriate policy and behavior — not the least of which is: Should the strings attached to Chapter 1 and special education funds be relaxed so as not to punish district experimentation? Should principals be allowed more discretion in budgeting allocations that permit flexibility in management? Is the state's contribution, in this case, \$25,000 per year, sufficient incentive to encourage risk-taking and classroom innovation? What are the effective collaborative strategies for breaking the real or perceived isolation among school, district and state?

This story takes yet another ironic twist before it ends.

Dennett brought her case before the state legislature, testifying in support of a proposal to limit bureaucratic meddling in a new restructured schools experiment. State legislators were quite taken by her testimony, and the proposal, called Schools for the 21st Century, is now part of a state law waiving state regulations for a pilot project group of 21 school districts.

The law requires a written commitment from all parties that they will work cooperatively during the term of the pilot study, including permission to modify local collective bargaining agreements. The \$2 million project also calls for a detailed evaluation and accountability plan to measure both student and school performance.

The irony is, the project does not include Mont Lake School.

"It's a myth that we have to pour in hordes of money to restructure a school," Dennett told me. "Money does help, but if we are given the flexibility to use the resources we have more creatively, we can accomplish these same goals without breaking the budget. We've got to start at the top with a vision and find creative ways to provide these resources. Otherwise, we allow the system to limit us."

Dennett is seeking foundation money to continue the Mont Lake experiment. The district has agreed to renew funding if the school can survive the next two years on a pilot basis.

WHAT SHOULD STATE POLICY BE?

The model of the single leader may be declining in favor of a coalition of leaders. . . who act together and divide various leadership functions among themselves. In fact, it may also be important to ensure that a much larger number of members of the organization are capable of taking on pieces of the leadership role. What will be important is that the functions are served — not that any single person has total responsibility for performing them.

— Rosabeth Moss Kanter

How can state policy makers respond to local need and encourage leadership? How can broader public participation in policy development make schools better?

Washington's Schools for the 21st Century is potentially a piece of model legislation for the rest of the states. We should follow it through implementation and evaluate it carefully.

On the opposite coast, an even more ambitious restructuring proposal is in the planning stages for Massachusetts. Earlier this summer, the Special Commission on the Conditions of Teaching, representing the executive and legislative branches, administrator and teacher organizations, as well as the association of state school boards and private industry, recommended that the education department solicit proposals from every school in the state interested in a multi-year restructuring experiment.

The House education chair, Representative Nicholas Paleologos, envisions what he calls 50 to 100 "Carnegie schools. . . in which teachers and principals are empowered beyond anything we've dreamed in this state or any other state."

Even before the special commission's recommendations had been made, the House had approved \$20 million for the project, and Senate leadership was pushing for similar budget appropriations.

As part of the state-school contract, the state and collective bargaining interests agree to "back off" from local, school-building decision making over such issues

What are the collaborative strategies for breaking the real or perceived isolation among school, district and state?

as curriculum, teacher and student assignments, textbooks, even the length of the school day, for the duration of the three- to four-year experiment.

"We've got to loosen up those bureaucratic shackles and introduce changes — not that make classrooms more miserable, but more engaging for students and teachers," explains Paleologos. "Key people in Massachusetts are beginning to see the move for better schools as an opportunity to do some interesting things that educators have always wanted to do."

Marc Tucker, executive director of the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, made several visits to Massachusetts during the previous year, promoting restructuring efforts among school officials across the state. Paleologos recalls that much of what Tucker said was not initially greeted with enthusiasm by school administrators.

"Principals had seen Carnegie as threatening," he says, "but the more they get into it, the more they realize that they are as frustrated as teachers because the authority they have is over small things. When it comes to the big issues — how to make the schools run better for kids — they're as powerless as the teachers. They realize that

the problems are systemic and that by sharing power, they gain power. They gain a faculty and staff that are more excited about what they are doing, and they buy in because they had a voice in crafting the proposals. Directly and indirectly, the Carnegie approach will have a profound impact on school leadership."

State education officials are planning to meet with staff from the federal Northeast regional education laboratory to develop a new set of weights and measures to determine how the restructured schools compare to those that choose to remain in the more traditional mode.

"We've got to be bold enough to step back from the way we've been doing things for the past 200 years and ask if that's really the best way to organize a school," concludes Paleologos. "We've got to pose that question to the professionals in the classroom. We have a hunch that when we lay the challenge down and ask the principals and the teachers 'How would you run this school?' we'll receive a flood of very interesting proposals."

In Arkansas, our state agency has demonstrated the special kind of response necessary to allow the implementation of innovative ideas and to encourage risk-taking.

As an associate member of the Coalition of Essential Schools sponsored by Ted Sizer, Springdale High School, in Springdale, Arkansas, has established a school-within-a-school. In this model restructuring of the school day, courses taught and roles of teachers made it impossible to apply the much heralded new Arkansas minimum school standards strictly. The State Department of Educa-

tion formulated a response that allowed Springdale to embark on the second wave of reform while keeping faith with the first.

As Dr. Ruth Steele, director of the Arkansas education department, says, "The state department felt that it was important to find ways to allow the district to try out promising and innovative approaches to learning, while meeting our new minimum standards. We knew they would exceed them so we were willing to take some of the roadblocks out of the way. The beauty of the Arkansas standards is that they were written to make demands on districts that needed to be pushed, but they don't get in the way of districts that show leadership and initiative on their own."

WHAT SHOULD THE OTHER PLAYERS DO?

Governors, legislators, state boards and agencies can begin by taking a statewide leadership audit, asking:

What is the supply and demand? How many school administrators will retire within the next 10 years? What steps are being taken to fill the void? Is higher education providing us with new, imaginative leadership or just more of the same? Are there adequately funded leadership academies — and just what is it that they are teaching? How do we license school administrators? Is certification portable? What are we doing to encourage more minorities and women into positions of school leadership?

There are specific state actions that will help to increase the pool of good leaders and enhance their ability to be successful. Among these are the following recommendations of the NGA leadership and management task force:

- Encouraging districts to identify teachers with leadership potential and encourage them to enter administration programs
- Encouraging districts to hire as principals only those who can demonstrate the necessary leadership and management skills
- Certifying beginning principals only provisionally until they successfully demonstrate the necessary on-the-job skills
- Making clinical experience in school leadership and management a key element of programs to train or certify administrators
- Developing alternative certification mechanisms so that candidates who have distinguished themselves as leaders in the public and private sectors can become eligible to manage schools or school districts
- Encouraging districts to provide opportunities for principals to teach periodically
- Developing a system to evaluate principals effectively and accurately
- Providing inservice training to school administrators through, for example, state-sponsored training centers or higher education institutions

- Collecting statewide information on the process and the outcomes of schooling
- Rewarding principals and schools for performance and effectiveness
- Highlighting success by documenting and disseminating effective strategies and models

State leaders can also use their influence to convey the seriousness of the problem and the importance of the leadership issue. For example, governors can help focus debate for positive change by stressing the need for competent district and school leadership. In New Jersey, Governor Tom Kean has campaigned statewide to encourage good people to run for school board elections, people willing to work with other board members and administrators for the good of the district. Too often, board members are too willing to ratify administrative decisions uncritically or to spend their energies looking for reasons to undercut school leaders.

What kind of bureaucratic practices work against effective school leadership?

To have credibility, state officials who make decisions affecting schools should spend more time in them. "I'm just astounded how detached and distant state legislators are from the education process," Massachusetts State Senator Michael J. Barrett says. "Yet the legislature is going to create rules, incentives and set statewide standards, and a lot of us have no idea of the day-to-dayness of schools."

Barrett, a new member of the legislature's Joint Committee on Education, was acting as principal for a day in the urban neighborhood school. "This was an eye-opener," he said when the final bell rang later that afternoon and he returned to his duties in the Massachusetts State House.

This sort of personal involvement in the learning process is one thing policy makers can do to find out what's happening in the schools, firsthand.

At the *district level*, *school boards* and *superintendents* must work to develop a climate that nurtures and promotes leadership despite innate tensions between policy makers and task masters.

In its report, *School Boards: Strengthening Grassroots Leadership*, the Institute for Educational Leadership notes, "It is an axiom that administrators should stay out of policy and that board members should refrain from intervening in administrative affairs. In the day-to-day welter of governance and management, however, those lines become blurred." School boards and superintendents should talk openly about roles and measures of accountability to reach some clarity on who is responsible for what.

What am I doing to become more and more involved with the learning process at my school?

Public school boards need the courage and resolve to challenge school administrators with the right questions, not burden them with intrusive meddling. They need the self-discipline to know the difference. Board members and district administrators must consider how their public actions, comments and behavior can fire up or immobilize an entire school system.

The state can provide the technical assistance for school board self-evaluation, so local authorities can ask:

What is the selection criteria for school leadership? What kind of bureaucratic practices work against effective school leadership? How are school leaders evaluated? What are the incentives and rewards for leadership initiative? How is incompetence identified, weeded out and replaced?

Finally, state leaders cannot ignore the very real inadequacy of so many educational administrator programs in our colleges, which usually have a monopoly on the certification process.

Earlier this year, as a member of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, I contributed to a report recommending that at least 300 universities and colleges should cease preparing education administrators. Simply put, programs that do not have the resources, the intellectual vigor and commitment that is needed to produce the kinds of new leadership that schools so badly need now and tomorrow should get out of that business altogether.

What are we doing to encourage more minorities and women into positions of school leadership?

Education faculty and deans must ask: Do we know what schools today look like? Are we developing courses and curricula, selecting textbooks and materials that reflect new knowledge and the changing needs of students and school personnel, that enhance school leadership? Are we developing the faculty? Does the entire department work in a team effort? How can we involve the entire campus in teacher education? How can we make the public schools full partners in teacher education and encourage innovative instruction? Does the president or chancellor know what goes on here?

What should happen in *your school* now?

Principals and teachers alike must ask:

Do my actions, behaviors and communications with my staff and my peers reflect a genuine concern for the people with whom I work? What is it that needs changing and how can I involve more staff in decision making that leads to greater administrative competence, efficiency and productivity? What personnel assignments can I make as an instructional leader that will maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses throughout

the school? What am I doing to become more and more involved with the learning process at my school?

Do I hold high expectations of my supervisors, my peers, my students and myself? How can I better demonstrate the importance of high expectations to associates and students? Do I participate in professional meetings and share my thoughts on how to make improvements and innovations throughout the school?

Are we taking advantage of talent offered by the business community? Are the professional groups, unions and school board associations working to support a climate that will encourage new leadership to make itself available, or are competing self-interests fostering gridlock?

The Massachusetts Special Commission on the Conditions of Teaching is just the type of collaborative effort among state leaders, unions, professional associations and private industry that has helped create a climate for leadership, a climate that has moved the debate out of the realm of petty preoccupation, that has united talent, money and organizational strength in the pursuit of a worthy vision.

In closing, I want to state again that we must all realize there is no one answer to the leadership question that will work for every school. Nor can we expect to get where we need to go without some difference of opinion and conflict. As John Gardner says:

Leadership is not a bland relationship. It is not without tension and conflict. One must not suppose that the ideal consists of leaders and constituents so deferential to one another that nothing happens. The ideal is leadership strong enough to propose clear directions and followers strong enough to criticize and amend — and finally, enough community of purpose to resolve disputes and move on.

I began my leadership odyssey at Little Rock's Central High School, and it seems fitting that some final thoughts turn to the future of that school. Central has played an important symbolic role in the development of American education. Thirty years ago it was the symbol of resistance to integration, a vestige of the Old South. Today it is the embodiment of the best in new American education: academic excellence, racial equality, aggressive optimism about the potential of its students.

This fall, Central, along with Springdale High School will begin integrating the research on effective schools and the recommendations set forth in *Time for Results* within the framework of existing programs that have demonstrated strong faculty leadership.

Central will reorganize activities to increase parent involvement with the learning process and explore alternative means to keep more at-risk students in school.

Central was chosen because its principal, Everett Hawks, and its teachers want to make a difference in learning and they believe they can. That is the first requirement of real leadership.

The magic of learning is in the classroom.

I have spent the last year as chairman of ECS concentrating on school leaders because I know that the magic of learning is in the classroom, in the interplay of student and teacher, student and fellow student, the student and his own imagination. This is the magic I have seen in schools such as Benjamin Mays High in Atlanta and Jefferson Junior High in Washington, D.C., the magic that comes through in the alternative school in Atlanta's Rich's department store.

For many reasons, too much time and money have been spent on activities that do not contribute to that magic and may even undermine it. Many American school leaders are working hard to do better. The purpose of this report has been to give caring educators and citizens guidance on what to do to speed the development of the leaders we still need. I hope it has succeeded.

Order copies of this book (no. LE-87-1), at \$5 each, from the ECS Distribution Center, 1860 Lincoln Street, Suite 300, Denver, Colorado 80295-0301; 303-830-3692. Bulk rates are available.

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